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SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

20 November 1951

SUBJECT: NIE-36/1: PROSPECTS FOR THE SURVIVAL OF A
NON-COMMUNIST REGIME IN BURMA

THE PROBLEM

To review the conclusions of NIE-36, "Prospects for Survival of a Non-Communist Regime in Burma," dated 1 August 1951, with reference to the timing of possible control over part or all of Burma by the Burmese Communists.

ESTIMATE

1. In NIE-36 it was estimated that the Communists "will probably be able within the next year or two to achieve de facto control over a considerable area of northern Burma" and that if covert Chinese Communist aid to the Burmese Communists continues "the Burmese Government is not likely to survive in the long run unless it greatly increases its political and military strength."

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2. Recent reports indicate that the situation may be deteriorating more rapidly than had been estimated in NIE-36. As anticipated, the Chinese Communists have continued their support of the Burmese Communists. In addition there is evidence that the Burmese Communists are making progress toward collaboration with the Karens, thus increasing the over-all capabilities of the insurgents. The pro-Communist Burma Workers and Peasants Party has become increasingly effective in unifying overt left-wing opposition to the Burmese Government and in hampering the government's operations against the insurgents. Within the government itself, friction between certain Army leaders (particularly Ne Win) and the Socialist leaders has not abated, and there are indications of rising tension between the moderate Socialists and leftists led by Ba Swe.

3. We conclude, therefore, that internal tensions are likely to weaken the regime more rapidly than anticipated in NIE-36 and that there is a greater possibility that the present government may be replaced by a leftist regime or even, though less likely, by a pro-Communist regime. We conclude also that the Burmese Communists

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will probably extend their military control in Northern Burma during the current fair weather season (six to eight months) and that, even without direct participation by Chinese Communist Forces, they will be able to achieve effective control over considerable areas of Northern Burma in a year to eighteen months.

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